

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

BURNS, Conrad (Republican)
Junior Senator from Montana
Elected (1988) to US Senate; reelected
Present term expires January 2007



BACKGROUND

Born: Gallatin, Montana - 25 January 1935

Home: Billings, Montana

Marital status: Married (Phyllis) - 2 children

Religion: Lutheran

Education: U of Missouri at Columbia, 1952-53

Military: US Marine Corps, 1955-57; corporal

Profession: Radio-TV farm announcer; cattle auctioneer

Political: Yellowstone County (MT) commissioner, 1987-88. Defeated incumbent Sen John Melcher (D) with 51.9% of the vote in the 1988 race, becoming the second Republican ever to represent Montana in the US Senate. Reelected in 1994 with 62% of the vote and in 2000 with 50.5% (14,000 votes).

Sen Burns is described as an “ebullient” and “folksy” conservative.

In the 108th Congress, offered an amdt to the FAA Reauthorization bill to provide grants to reimburse general aviation entities for the security costs incurred and revenue foregone as a result of terrorism and the military action in Iraq. Served as a conferee on the FAA Reauthorization. Drew attention to a meeting of the Internet Caucus and noted that the US Asian Network kickoff is January 27, 2003. Noted that it was estimated that by 2005 there will be over 250 million cell phone users accompanied by tremendous demands for spectrum and increased privacy concerns. Offered an amdt to the DoD Appns providing for Lew and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration Activities. Expressed support for H.R. 1307, the military tax bill. Commended Amb Bremer for a status briefing on the situation in Iraq; believed that the US troops are the best ambassadors on the ground in Iraq—noted that they are making great strides in winning the hearts of the Iraqi people as they try to help them establish a free and open government. Discussed the difficulties of moving state-owned enterprises to the private sector. Believed use and wear, rather than war, are responsible for the dwindling infrastructure in Iraq. Announcing SAC-approved provisions for Malmstrom AFB in the milcon appns bill, asserted “Our men and women who wear the uniform deserve the best facilities we can provide them.” Added that by modernizing Malmstrom, it has been made safer from the risk of closure in the next round of BRAC. Previously announced that the Air Force Space Command would cut over 1,100 jobs from its nine bases, including Malmstrom. Joined other colleagues in announcing the formation of the E-911 Caucus, focused on elevating homeland security issues.

Additional Background: F-16 orientation flight on 3 Sep 91; Member, Senate Air Force Caucus

AF Bases: Malmstrom AFB; Minuteman Sites; Great Falls Facility; Great Falls IAP (ANG)

COMMITTEES

APPROPRIATIONS – Subc on Defense; Military Construction

BUDGET

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES

SMALL BUSINESS

BOARD OF VISITORS, US AIR FORCE ACADEMY, 1993-96; 1998-2000